



After close examination of all the available information His Majesty's Government wish to state categorically that there are no grounds whatsoever to support the suggestion that there was any treachery on the part of British officers. Further, the allegation that His Majesty's Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of Indians in order to gain advantage elsewhere is totally devoid of foundation.

Speed 20 15 km/h 23758 G

...the more  
pastor gained credence because in the  
last months of the war the Latin  
people were called upon to suffer  
the most terrible things.  
When the Allied armies were there  
to have captured Berlin in September  
4, 1944, the Latin people witnessed  
the preparations for that event, and  
the results, as events unfolded.

[illegible]

PUT THE ROUND CHAIRS  
DOWN

*Lat. 42.24*

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

4 1177949

Cutting dated

194

## A WAR-TIME TRAGEDY IN THE NETHERLANDS

### How Allied Agents Were Captured

From a Special Correspondent

It is now possible for the first time to tell the story of a tragic misfortune of war which cost the lives of many members of the Dutch Resistance movement and which has been wrongly understood by some Dutch patriots as a deliberate and inexplicable act of treachery on the part of the British Intelligence Service.

From information available in London the facts appear to have been as follows.

The first agent dropped into Holland by parachute in the summer of 1943 was soon captured by the Germans, who induced him to work for them against the Allies. This was not discovered in London until the end of 1943. In the meanwhile several agents had been dropped who had no reason to suspect the loyalty of their predecessor and who therefore trusted him and co-operated with him until they were captured themselves. (It is believed that a few of them had agreed to work with the Germans.)

At length two of them escaped from German captivity and made their way to London, where they reported on the desperate situation in Holland.

It was then decided to drop all agents "blind" in future, without informing anyone in Holland when or where they would arrive. By this method Allied Intelligence was able to build up a new organisation whose members were at first able to operate with some success. But as their activities expanded they came into contact with members of the previous "tainted" organisation.

Further demonstrations followed, and the Germans were eventually able to capture most of the members of

several, therefore, as if the treachery of the first agent actually and thoroughly exploited by the Germans led to the capture of many more.

This information confirms some aspects at least of the many stories about the mass episode which have been current in the Netherlands for many months. On the other hand, it bolsters the conclusion that these unhappy consequences were due to deliberate treachery by the Intelligence Service in London, a conclusion which many Dutchmen have drawn from the facts available to them and in default of any official explanation.

#### A NETHERLANDS VERSION

A young Dutch lawyer, Mr. J. E. d. Starp, has just written a pamphlet "The English Plot" (Uitgave Schiedrdukkertj, Dordrecht) which is probably a comprehensive account of the facts as they appear to many of his countrymen. He asserts that, following the capture and with the co-operation of the first agent already mentioned, there appears from his account to have been a Dutchman, the head of the German counter-intelligence service in Holland, a man named Schneider, was in constant

but says that they were imprisoned when they reached London and they reveal the damning facts about the Intelligence Service's co-operation with the Germans.

It is clear that the melancholy history of the second organisation, set up in 1943 as the result of these two agents' report, would inevitably lead colour to this last assertion for the news that the two men brought to London did not, in the long run, prevent the subsequent capture of many of their comrades.

A comparison of these two accounts shows that in Holland, at any rate, the information available on the matter is incomplete and therefore misleading. If an inquiry has been held, it has been held in secret, and the public has not been reassured by what it has heard both during and since the war. The lack of any official statement has helped to convince honest and patriotic Dutchmen that their suspicions are justified. In default of further information the Dutch can hardly be blamed for their suspicions, which are the more insidious because they affect Governments rather than individuals and can easily do lasting harm to the relations between two peoples who have rendered each other valuable service in peace and war and whose traditional friendship has hitherto been free of this ugly kind of suspicion.

#### WAR-TIME SUFFERINGS

Such suspicion undoubtedly exists at the moment in the hearts of many Dutchmen, and has perhaps the more easily gained credence because in the last months of the war the Dutch people were called upon to suffer greater hardships in the common cause than the people of any other

When the Allied forces were thought to have captured Dordrecht on September 4, 1944, the Dutch peoples' enthusiastic preparations for their welcome (tragically premature, as events were to show) were brutally punished by the Germans. Their hopes were raised again when the airborne landings were made at Arnhem. On September 18 the Dutch railwaymen, responding to their Government's appeal, heroically and voluntarily incurred the German wrath by declaring and maintaining a transport strike which was of incalculable military value to the Allies. In order to capture Waltheren the Allies had to breach the dike and flood the land. Finally, in the spring of 1945, the Allied advance brought starvation to the invaded areas of the Netherlands.

This heroic record of enterprise and sacrifice has seldom been equalled. Since the war the people of Britain and of Holland have paid tribute to Arnhem, to those who established that record and to those who helped them to do it. It would be tragic as well as unjust to allow anything to obscure the recognition for the Dutch and British peoples of each other's contributions to the common cause.

The charges put forward in Mr. d. Starp's book, therefore, are

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

was never understood by some Dutch persons as a deliberate and inexplicable act of treachery on the part of the British Intelligence Service.

From information available in London the facts appear to have been as follows:

The first agent dropped into Holland by parachute in the summer of 1941 was soon captured by the Germans, who induced him to work for them against the Allies. This was not discovered in London until the end of 1942. In the meanwhile several agents had been dropped who had no reason to suspect the loyalty of their predecessor and who therefore trusted him and co-operated with him until they were captured themselves. (It is believed that a few of them also agreed to work with the Germans.)

At length two of them escaped from German captivity and made their way to London, where they reported on the desperate situation in Holland.

It was then decided to drop all agents "blind" in future, without informing anyone in Holland when or where they would arrive. By this method Allied Intelligence was able to build up a new organisation whose members were at first able to operate with some success. But as their activities expanded they came into contact with members of the previous "trained" organisation.

Further complications followed, and the Germans were eventually able to capture most of the members of the new organisation, as if the treachery of the first agent skilfully and thoroughly exploited by the Germans led to the capture of many more.

This information confirms some aspects at least of the many stories about the same episode which have been current in the Netherlands for many months. On the other hand, it bolsters the conclusion that these unhappy consequences were due to deliberate treachery by the Intelligence Service in London, a conclusion which many Dutchmen have drawn from the facts available to them and in default of any official explanation.

#### A NETHERLANDS VERSION

A young Dutch lawyer, Mr. J. E. v. d. Stulp, has just written a pamphlet ("The English Plot," *Uitgeverij Schoonheidskrans*, Two Groothoofd) which is probably a comprehensive account of the facts as they appear to many of his countrymen. He asserts that, following the capture and with the cooperation of the first agent already mentioned (who appears from his account to have been a Dutchman), the head of the German charter intelligence service in Holland, a man named Schneider, was in constant communication with London until the spring of 1944, using no fewer than sixteen separate radio circuits.

From his knowledge of the agents' radio operating procedures and of the identification signals they had to make, Mr. v. d. Stulp argues that it must have been obvious in London that the first agent was co-operating with the Germans. In view of what he claims to know about the strict precautions which were taken to identify the originator of any message, he refuses to believe that an honest mistake or genuine error of judgement could have been made and draws the conclusion that the radio traffic with the Germans was deliberately prolonged in order to betray to the enemy as many Dutch patriots as possible.

He admits that two agents did escape from German captivity in 1942

and that the history of the second organisation, set up in 1943 as the result of these two agents' report, would inevitably lend colour to this last accusation for the news that the two men brought to London did not in the long run prevent the subsequent capture of many of their comrades.

A comparison of these two accounts shows that in Holland, at any rate, the information available on the matter is incomplete and therefore misleading. If an enquiry has been held, it has been held in secret and the public has not been reminded of what it has heard with decency and since the war. The lack of any official statement has helped to convince honest and patriotic Dutchmen that their suspicions are justified. In default of further information the Dutch can hardly be blamed for their suspicions, which are the more insidious because they affect Governments rather than individuals and can cause so lasting harm to the relations between two peoples who have rendered each other valuable service in peace and war and whose traditional friendship has hitherto been free of this ugly kind of suspicion.

#### WAR-TIME SUFFERINGS

Such suspicion undoubtedly exists at the moment in the hearts of many Dutchmen, and has perhaps the more easily gained credence because in the last months of the war the Dutch people were called upon to suffer greater hardships in the common struggle than in any other country. When the Allied armies were thought to have captured Arnhem on September 4, 1944, the Dutch people's enthusiastic preparations for their welcome (fratricide preparations, as events were to show) were brutally punished by the Germans. These losses were raised again when the airborne landings were made at Arnhem. On September 18 the Dutch railwaymen, responding to their Government's appeal, heroically and voluntarily incurred the Germans' wrath by declaring and maintaining a transport strike which was of incalculable military value to the Allies. In order to capture Walcheren the Allies had to breach the dikes and flood the land. Finally, in the spring of 1945, the Allied advance brought starvation to the invaded areas of the Netherlands.

This heroic record of enterprise and sacrifice has seldom been equalled. Since the war the people of Britain and of Holland have paid tribute at Arnhem to those who established that record and to those who helped them to do it. It would be tragic as well as unjust to allow anything to obscure the recognition by the Dutch and British peoples of each other's contributions to the common cause.

The charges put forward in Mr. v. d. Stulp's book would, if generally accepted, clearly stand in the way of such recognition. But the information now available to London points strongly to the conclusion that the capture of the agents was due not to treachery but to a grave mistake made by the Intelligence Service in London. The terrible accusation of treachery must be rejected for the ugly and unhappily rumoured that it is. An authoritative statement might well now be made by the British Foreign Office. Suspicion drives us to secrecy, and if the tragic fate of so many courageous Dutchmen is allowed to poison the relations between these countries and ours it would indeed be an ironic tragedy for Dr. Goebbels and a tragedy for the nations which fought against him.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Mr. Street should see Sir P. Nichols' letter as soon as possible.

If we authorised the Ambassador to issue a statement along the lines that he suggests, we should consider, and if possible decide now, how far we shall be prepared to amplify it if it provokes an outcry in Holland.

We should, I think, avoid the impression that we are reluctant to say anything about the "Englandspiel", but will do so if pressed sufficiently strongly. Sir P. Nichols' suggested statement, the "high moral line" suggested in Mr. Shuckburgh's letter of March 28th. It refutes the two main allegations contained in "Het Englandspiel":

- (a) That there was treachery on the British side.
- (b) That there was a diabolical plot to exterminate Dutch patriots.

However, in view of the complications of the case, a statement such as this, although true, is not convincing. Van der Weide is clearly in a position to give evidence, which the Dutch would find very difficult to reconcile with such a statement. We should then be faced with the problem of whether or not to amplify it. As we should not be able to do so without disclosing details which we wish to conceal, we should, I think, be prepared to ride out any storms that might develop, and withstand any pressure to give detailed explanations. We should be on record as having denied the allegations, and we should be able to rely on our performance during the war, and on the good sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

On balance, therefore, I think we should authorise Sir P. Nichols to issue a statement along the lines which he suggests. It would, I think, be a mistake to use the German expression "Englandspiel" in a British statement. It might be thought to confer a validity to the whole story, which we do not of course recognise. I would suggest, therefore, that the words "so-called" should be inserted before each reference to the "Englandspiel" in Sir P. Nichols' draft. Otherwise, it seems adequate.

*Baker*

Mr. Street will no doubt say whether it will be possible to give Mr. Baker any further information from S.O.S. records. He will also, I am sure, wish to consider what reply should be returned to the Dutch, should they ask for Major Bingham to appear before the enquiry.

*Rosen*

(R. H. Marsh)  
9th April, 1949

*Mr. Shuckburgh*

*Marsh*

Notes

Mr. Shuckburgh thinks that  
it would be preferable to  
avoid using the word "England-  
Spirit" and suggests instead  
"the operations of the Netherlands  
Resistance Movement".

Roussau  
9/4/42

Not used in  
report

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1 Mr. Joy

Memo.

No. 197/P.

19.4.50.

Reference Sir Philip Nichols' letter of April 19.

I have no objection to the issue of the proposed statement at any time which the Ambassador considers suitable. I do not think that there is any objection to the use of the term "Englandspiel". It is in fact the Dutch version of the German name for the operation and should not be interpreted to mean "The English Plot" but "The operation against England" (i.e. the English organisation in Holland).

I think that we can probably meet Mr. Barker's request for further information about the reasons why it was not appreciated in London that the A.O.E. organisation in Holland was under enemy control. I am looking into this urgently and will try to produce a draft statement soon.

I think we should tell Sir Philip Nichols that it would be undesirable for Major Dingemans to be called to give evidence before the Committee of Enquiry. The reason for this is that he did not join the controlling staff of A.O.E. in London until 12 April 1943, by which time the German penetration had been achieved. Accusations against him personally are therefore baseless.

(Sg)

J.E.D. Street.

28th April, 1950.

Mr. Maron

W. Dept.

May 12/50

As Mr. Hayter's friends have suggested no objection to Sir P. Nichols' statement I think we should now go ahead & authorize him to issue it when an opportunity occurs.

I do not think we should use the

/word

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Minutes

"Englandspiel" in spite of Mr. Street's explanation. "The operation against England" is certainly not the happiest description of the operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement.

I now submit a draft copy to Sir P. Nichols.

Roussac

13/April

John Curle

144

JOHN CURLE  
WESTERN D.P.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

/ M. Dickwell

Nothing to be written in this margin.

Mr. Bournell <sup>reply to Mr. Bournell</sup>  
18/5

I don't know whether you  
have finished the attached draft  
to Danes of the Commission of Enquiry.  
Your Secretary sent it to me on Saturday  
14<sup>th</sup> with some other of the E. spirit "pp".

I have made one or two pencilled  
comments which the most important  
is on the first page - "Chosen in  
wireless messages". Perhaps you  
would consider & let me have the  
draft back soon.

Rosen

16/5/1919

See over

THIS IS A COPY  
THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS  
& OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

rather than a  
game played

not think that it would be  
possible "English" and though it is possible that  
it signifies the game played against England  
not by England. The use of this expression  
1/1919

Mr. Mason,  
Western Department.

23156 G

We noted that your statement by the  
attached draft to Dancer about the wireless  
message was not satisfactory.

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

- ③ On reflection the friends doubt the wisdom of isolation, the final paragraph in square brackets, which was actually bracketed so that you should consider the advisability of its inclusion. They would also like you to decide whether the ellipses part of the statement on wireless checks should be included, but they think that the reference to the fact that many Dutch exports consistently omitted their checks should certainly be served.
- ②

Nigel Becknell  
N. Becknell.

10th May, 1940.

THIS IS A COPY  
THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
8(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

John Street  
19/5

I see no objection to sending  
Mr. Becknell's statement, as amended,  
to Mr. Dancer of the Commission of  
Enquiry.

THIS IS A COPY  
THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
8(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

not think that it would be wise to  
expression "Englandspiel" although we realize that  
it signifies the game played against England  
and not by England. The use of this expression  
is not correct / sample

either known -  
game played

AT 10/10/10

Emergency.

Please see draft to Sir  
P. Nichols.

Re: *Reinason*

27 ~~th~~ / May.

*John Russell*

265

JOHN RUSSELL,  
WESTERN DEPT.

*(R)*

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

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THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED  
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
34(1) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

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IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
34(1) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

*rather than a  
general principle*

not think that...  
procession "Englandspiel" although we realise that  
it signifies the game...  
not by England. The... is...  
The... is...  
The... is...

23156.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
THE HAGUE

23156. 11. 5. 5.

23156. 11. 5. 5.

23156. 11. 5. 5.

My Dear Sir,

In reference to my To, Secret letter of 13/11/49 of 11th March, I have now discussed the question of the "Englandspid".

I will tell you that, granted all the objections to a detailed statement that are outlined in your letter of the 27th March, a time is likely to come when we cannot pass over in silence accusations of treachery or the deliberate sacrifice of Dutch lives for purposes of our own. And an occasion is likely to arise when the question of whether or not the death penalty is heard towards the end of this month. To meet such a situation I shall, with authority, to issue a very short and, emphatic but uninformative statement on the lines of the enclosed draft. We should of course refuse to be drawn into any further discussion of the matter.

Mr. Barker has not returned the Selborne Report, with the following comments which were conveyed to us orally by Colonel Fooker:-

1. The Report is extremely grateful for the loan of this document.

2. The Report is a fair review of the position as known at the time and it corresponds to the facts available to him.

3. There are a few slight inaccuracies in it, these are due mainly to lack of later material gathered from more wider sources.

4. It hardly serves to help Mr. Barker at the present time since the Report is a factual review of evidence rather than an analysis of it, which is the true test.

Yours faithfully,  
State Department.

THIS COPY  
WILL  
BE OF THE  
COPY W. 550

... it is ...  
... Englandspid" although we realised that  
it signifies the game played against ...  
... by England. The use of this expression ...

...  
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BRITISH EMBASSY.  
THE HAGUE

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst. in relation to the statement of the Dutch Government regarding the alleged violation of the neutrality of the Netherlands by England.

I am sorry to hear that the statement of the Dutch Government is not satisfactory to you. I am, however, unable to see how it can be otherwise, as it is based on the facts of the case.

Very respectfully,  
The Secretary

as far as the Dutch Government, even the balance of the statement from the Dutch Government is not satisfactory to us.

Reverting to your draft statement, we do not think that it would be wise to see the expression "England" in the statement, as it is not a sign of the Government of England. The use of the word "England" is a reason for the statement.

with the Dutch Government  
some other day

7th April 1941

SECRET 1

The attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn to allegations which have appeared in certain sections of the Netherlands press, and more recently in pamphlet form, concerning the ~~unpleasant~~ *operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement*

After close examination of all the available information His Majesty's Government wish to state categorically that there are no grounds whatsoever to support the suggestion that the ~~unpleasant~~ *operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement* <sup>→</sup> ~~by an agency of~~ British Officers. Further, the allegation that His Majesty's Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of their subjects in order to gain an advantage elsewhere is totally devoid of foundation.

There was any  
treachery on the part of  
the

so as of the Dutch to prove the truthfulness of the statement from the Dutch sentiment against us.

Reverting to your draft statement, we think it would be wise to use the expression "England" although we realize that it signifies the game played against <sup>us</sup> ~~us~~ by England. The use of the expression

in the line on  
General Playon

F. K. I. J. v. P. C. E. S. W. L.

212 Apr 11, 1949

~~SECRET~~

Thank you for your letter 10/25 & of  
7th April with which you enclosed draft of the  
statement which you would like to read about  
"Worldwide".

12/11/14

Sir Phil  
Nichols,  
The Home Office

2000

www.sagepub.co.uk

that there was less fire on  
the British side, and -

It is ~~that~~ where we are a ~~discontinuity~~

plot to exterminate Dutch

$\frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{1}{2} m v^2 + U(r) \right) = 0$

We agree that you will issue a statement along these lines when a suitable opportunity presents itself and I enclose for this purpose a slightly amended version of your draft.

I think you will agree that the statement, "though true, is not relevant." It is more likely that doubts will be cast on the validity of the statement and that we should be expected to amplify it. As we cannot be held to the statement without amplifying it, we must be held to the statement, we should be expected to amplify it. "I refuse any further explanation and rely on my performance during the war as the best evidence of the truth of the statement." I refuse any further explanation and rely on my performance during the war as the best evidence of the truth of the statement from the evidence. I refuse any further explanation and rely on my performance during the war as the best evidence of the truth of the statement.

Reverting to your draft statement, we do not think it is wise to use the expression "E. Grandpierre" as we wish to avoid any confusion with the <sup>13</sup> Grandpierre family. The name of the person in question is E. Grandpierre.

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great fire, and

might be taken to

~~happy~~ that we read as that the Germans had  
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~~entertained~~ us, and while this is true, we do  
not think there is any need to rub it into the  
mind we have therefore substituted appropriate  
phrases for "Sug. display" where it appeared in  
your draft.

Hayter's friends think that they will probably  
meet Da. er's request for further information  
about the reason why it was ~~to be~~ recounted in  
London that the SCA organization in Holland  
was under enemy control. They hope to produce  
a joint statement soon.

As regards an official request from Da. er  
for Major Bingham to appear before the Inquiry,  
Hayter's friends say that this would not be  
desirable as he did not join the controlling  
staff of S.C.A. in London until late April, 1940,  
by which time the German penetration had been  
achieved. Accusations against him personally  
are therefore baseless.

20  
100  
100

2 3156/1051  
TOP SECRET

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Sir Philip  
The

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W. 1.

(Z 3156/1051/29 G)  
TOP SECRET

20th April, 1949.

*my dear Sir*

Thank you for your letter 150/25/49 of 7th April with which you enclosed the draft of a statement which you would like to issue about the "Englandspiel".

2. The draft seems adequate as it denies the two main allegations contained in Van der Storp's pamphlet; namely that there was treachery on the British side, and a plot to exterminate Dutch patriots. We agree that you should issue it when a suitable opportunity presents itself and I enclose for this purpose a slightly amended version of your draft.

3. There is one point about the wording. We do not think that it would be wise to use the expression "Englandspiel" although we realise that it signifies a game played against England rather than a game played by England. But the use of the expression by us might be taken to imply some sort of admission, and whilst we realise that the Germans outwitted us, there is no need to rub salt into the wound. We have therefore substituted appropriate phrases for "Englandspiel" where it appeared in your draft.

4. I think you will agree that the statement, though true, is in virtue of its bald and unsupported character, not very convincing. It is more than likely that doubts will be cast on the veracity of the statement and that we shall be pressed to amplify it. As we should not be able to do this without disclosing details which we wish to conceal, we should be prepared to "ride the high horse", refuse any further explanation and rely on our performance during the war and the good sense of the Dutch to prevent the baldness of the statement from prejudicing Dutch sentiment against us.

5. Hayter's friends think that they can probably meet Banker's request for further information about the reasons why it was not appreciated in London that the S.O.E. organisation in Holland had come under enemy control. They hope to produce a draft statement soon.

6. As regards an official request from Banker for Major Bingham to appear before the Inquiry, Hayter's friends say that this would not be desirable. In any case he did not join the controlling staff of S.O.E. in London until 1st April, 1945, by which time the German penetration had been achieved. Accusations against him personally are therefore baseless.

*Yours sincerely*

*George Buchanan*

(C.A.E. Buchanan)

Sir Philip Nichols, K.C.M.G., K.C.,  
The Hague.

7th April 1949

DRAFT STATEMENT

The attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn to allegations which have appeared in certain sections of the Netherlands Press, and more recently in pamphlet form, concerning the operations of the Netherlands Resistance Movement.

After close examination of all the available information His Majesty's Government wish to state categorically that there are no grounds whatsoever to support the suggestion that there was any treachery on the part of British officers. Further, the allegation that His Majesty's Government deliberately sacrificed the lives of Dutchmen in order to gain advantage elsewhere is totally devoid of foundation.

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10) "The American People" est. This refers to the act of the American people to enter an agreement with the United States and the United States of America. It is a very important document in the history of the United States. It is a very important document in the history of the United States. It is a very important document in the history of the United States.

2.

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18-4788  
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However, we must not forget that the existence of a "true" decision is not a matter of fact, but a matter of value.

2) The "moral" aspect. This refers to the fact that a decision is not only a matter of fact, but also a matter of value. It is not only a matter of fact, but also a matter of value. It is not only a matter of fact, but also a matter of value.



So far as the message received, it was not  
the first time, no direct conclusion as not  
known. First, many of the messages received  
in Holland are considerably mutilated and  
it was frequently impossible to tell whether  
messages had been omitted or not. Second, it  
was by no means an easy task to determine  
a message fully understood the words of these  
messages and in many cases the agents forgot to  
omit them from their messages. Third, the  
omission or commission of checks has been  
shown in other theatres of S O E operations  
to be inoperative as a test of the agent's  
reliability.

So far as the "hand-writing" is concerned,  
there are three points to make. First, in many  
cases the agents themselves declined to  
transmit under German control. Second, in  
cases where they did so, it needed a most  
elaborate receiving system to detect the  
difference. Third, an electrical machine was  
used during the war to measure the physical  
characteristics of a transmitting operator but  
this was not developed in time to be of use  
while the Dutch operation was going on.

Another point where contributions to the  
security of the operation was the system,  
also, as referred by agents, whereby they were  
not dropped "blind", but to reception  
committees already established in Holland.  
This system was extensively used in other  
theatres by S O E. Some of the Dutch  
reception committees are known to the  
Germans at an early stage, it followed that

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NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

the agents dropped to them fell into enemy hands at once. [It is of interest to record that Major Bingham, who has seen the subject of so many allegations by certain sections in Holland, considered that the system of reception committees was most insecure and, when he joined the controlling staff of S.O.E., he gave instructions that any future agents are to be dropped "blind".

Finally, it must be admitted that staffs controlling clandestine operations abroad have a psychological resistance to being persuaded that their agents are under enemy control, and there have been cases in which such staffs have gone on believing in the security of their agents abroad when all the evidence pointed the other way.

1

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

8th June, 1949.

(S 3156/1051/29 G)  
TOP SECRET

OUTFILE

*My dear Phil,*

As promised in paragraph 5 of my letter S 3156/1051/G of the 20th April, we have again looked into the request by Mr. Barker that a statement should be made available to him explaining as far as possible the reasons why the London headquarters controlling S.O.E. operations in the Netherlands were not aware of the penetration of their groups by the Germans. I am sorry that there has been so much delay.

2. The technical indications can be divided into the following categories:

(a) Checks in wireless messages

Each agent before being sent to the Netherlands was given two separate checks called "bluff" and "true" checks respectively. These were cypher groups one of which the agent was supposed to include in all messages. His instructions were that if captured and interrogated he was to give the Germans the "bluff" check, which would thus continue to be included in all messages; but he was, on no account to reveal the existence of the "true" check, which he was to omit from all messages sent after his capture.

(b) The "hand-writing" test

This refers to the fact that an experienced wireless operator can sometimes get to know the personal characteristics of the transmitting operator at the other end of the link. It was thus possible that, if an agent were captured and replaced, the change in technique would be noticed at the receiving end.

3. So far as the checks are concerned, there were three reasons why the correct conclusion was not drawn. First, many of the messages received from the Netherlands were considerably mutilated and it was frequently impossible to tell whether checks had been omitted or not. Secondly, it was by no means an easy task to ensure that the agents really understood the purpose of the checks and in many cases the captured agents forgot to carry out the drill. Thirdly, the inclusion or omission of checks, as was shown in other theatres of S.O.E. operations, was inconclusive as a test of the agent's reliability.

4. So far as the "hand-writing" is concerned, there are three points to make. First, in many cases the agents themselves continued to transmit under German control. Secondly, in cases where they were replaced it needed a most expert receiving operator to notice the difference. Thirdly, although an electrical machine was devised during the war to measure the physical characteristics of a transmitting operator, it was not developed in time to be of use while the Netherlands operation was going on.

5. /

Sir Philip Nichols, K.C.S.G., M.C.,  
The Hague.

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5. Another point which contributed to the insecurity of the operations was the system, always preferred by agents, whereby they were not dropped "blind", but to reception committees already established in the Netherlands. This system was extensively used in other theatres by S.O.E. Since most of the Netherlands reception committees were known to the Germans at an early stage, it followed that the agents dropped to them fell into enemy hands at once.

6. Finally, it must be admitted that staffs controlling clandestine operations abroad have a psychological resistance to being persuaded that their agents are under enemy control, and there have been cases in which such staffs have gone on believing in the security of their agents when all the evidence pointed the other way.

7. You can pass all of this on to Monsieur Danker if you wish.

*Yours ever,*

*Egd.*  
(C.A.E. Shuckburgh)

Please see the attached  
excerpt from The Hague Embassy  
review of the Dutch press for 27<sup>th</sup>  
April.

No

Have Mr. Halford's friends any  
knowledge of the information which  
Mr. de Jong & Dr. Cohen are supposed  
to have?

(A) Yes

It might, perhaps, be worth  
asking the Embassy to get some  
advance information on this from  
Mr. Dawson of the Commission of  
Enquiry.

Rosenauer

30/April.

Mr. Halford.

Mr. Halford's friends would be very  
grateful for anything of the kind  
of information mentioned as (A).

May 1975.

Mr. Mason,  
W. Dept.

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MEMORANDUM

Please see draft letter to Sir  
Philip Nichols.

Rosen  
11/11/49.

John F. Marshall  
12.5

JOHN F. MARSHALL  
WESTERN DEPT.

CAF  
2/5

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